

the small-pox she would have been so." Her letters glint with these sharp insights. Writing of Fraude, who had been given a post by Mr. Darbyshire, a well-known Manchester magnate, after the failure over *The Nemesis of Faith*, she remarks:

Mr. Fraude is domesticated at the Darbyshires' till October. . . . If anyone under the sun has a magical, magnetic, glamour-like influence, that man has. . . . The D.S. all bend and bow to his will, like reeds before the wind, blow whichever way it listeth. He smokes cigars constantly; Pire, Robert, Arthur, Vernon (my, once even little Francis), smoke constantly. He disbelieves, they disbelieve; he wears shabby garments, they wear shabby garments. . . . I stand just without the circle of his influence; resisting with all my might, but feeling and seeing the attraction.

And of Florence Nightingale after she had been staying at the Nightingale home near Mallock:

She and I had a grand quarrel one day. She is, I think, too much for institutions, sisterhoods and associations, and she said if she had influence enough not a mother should bring up a child herself; there should be crèches for the rich as well as the poor. . . . That exactly tells of what seems to me the want—but then this want of love for individuals becomes a gift and a very rare one. If one takes it in conjunction with her intense love for the race, her utter unselfishness in serving and ministering.

It is observation and comment of this kind which gives asstringency to such a novel as *Wives and Daughters*.

She is too breathless a letter-writer to pause for meditated reflections or set descriptions. Her reflections break out spontaneously: "I do like associations—they are like fragrance which I value so in a flower." And, "I like kings & queens & nightingales and minorettes & roses." And: "I do feel grateful to my children if they will pay attention to those I love, or who have been kind to me." Her descriptions seem equally spontaneous. Here is one of Oxford in November:

Mr. Stanley walked down with us to Christ Church, and into the meadows up to the Bridge at one end of High St. the beech leaves lay golden brown on the broad pathway; the leaves on the elms were quite still, except when one yellowed than the rest came floating softly down. The Colleges were marked out clearly against the blue sky, and

beautiful broad shadows made the lighter portions of the buildings stand out clear in the sunshine. Oh! I shall never forget Oxford. . . .

She has a talent too for the quick *mise en scène*, part of her novelist's gift. Here she is setting the scene for Charles Eliot Norton:

I am sitting here by myself in the dining-room by the light of one candle, half-dimmed and half-amused by the chatter of 'the children' in the next room—Julia just come to wish me good-night, so it is 9 o'clock when Meta Florence & Julia have been sitting till now, when Julia the chatter-box and perpetual singer having gone to bed, sudden silence succeeds. I suspect that Meta has taken up either the 5th vol. of *Modern Painters*, or Tyndall on *Glaciers*, and Florence is probably reading the "Amber Witch". Mr. Gaskell is out, at a meeting of the Literary and Philosophical Society making arrangements for the meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science in Sept. . . . and Elliott (Elliott, Mary & Hearn are still with us) has just come in to ask me if Master would like some bread & milk when he comes home? So now you know the exact state of affairs on this Tuesday evening.

Another picture for Norton, actually written some two years earlier though it could easily have referred to breakfast the next morning:

Breakfast is still on the table; waiting for Mr. Gaskell who was very much tired last night, and so is late this morning. I am sitting at the round writing table in the dining room—Marianne is mending me a pen, over the fire place, in order that the bits may drop into the fender; Meta is gone into the garden, to tell Joseph about perennials for next year. . . . So here we all are, placed, ready to your imagination.

The Gaskell home at 42 Plymouth Grove, Manchester, is conjured up for us more than 100 years later as vividly as it must have been for Norton who had once visited there. We at once get the impression of Mr. Gaskell, the respected minister of Cross St. Unitarian chapel, a leader of Manchester intellectual society but apt to be aloof in family life—he took his holidays on his own and had a study to himself whereas his wife had to sit down anywhere to write her letters and novels. Yet he was always the very much acknowledged

head of the house. She handed her publishers' cheques over to him and her contracts were kept in his desk. But, if he was the somewhat withdrawn head, she was always the expansive centre; with the exception of her husband everyone was swept into orbit around her. In particular, her elder daughters as they grew up took on more and more of the household management and also of her secretarial work, thus releasing her for long visits away when she could write in peace. When they were absent domestic life got out of hand. After a visit to Germany, she writes to Marianne who had returned to England rather later than the rest of the family:

You wd have had a letter to greet you in England, had we been quite sure of your departure from Kreuznach. Yes! you would, though we had no time to brush our hair. Scanty time we have ourselves. Tell Hearn (their old nurse) I've my own doubts as to Julia's ever having washed since we left Germany, and as for her hair! It looks all very well and I have no time to enquire further. Mary (a maid) has been away since this day 3 weeks; & ever since Thursday week *backwards* the house has been full; at least nearly so. . . . Mr. & Mrs. Field came that day; & stayed till Wednesday—*the CHAIRING* she very nice, but almost entirely living in her own room, & liking promiscuous teas, & odd foods, at odd times—and help in all her dressings &c. Effie came on Saturday (week backwards) a General & Mrs. Cotton . . . on that same Saturday—to lunch; a Mr. MacElroy . . . to tea and generally all Sunday—when the Fields were on the point of going. Mary Holland wrote to offer herself for Friday night; & Emma Shann wrote to offer herself "for a few days" coming today; & oh dear! Papa is not well with his liver; & you can fancy how how busy we are, & we can't get Mrs. Brett (washerwoman) & don't know who to get, & Hearn's keys can't be found—&c. &c. . . . Moreover we can't get a bit of butter; our butter woman won't come, why we can't make out. . . . Tell Hearn all her wits are wasted in this desolate butlerless, servantless, headless, washerwomanless, company full household.

Given this hectic family and social life, it is a marvel that Mrs. Gaskell achieved the work she did even with her daughters' background help; six novels, a large number of sizable stories and a masterly biography all crammed into the interstices of

twenty years. *Mary Barton* was begun towards the end of 1818 in an effort to concentrate her thoughts after the death of her year-old son, *Wives and Daughters* was within a few pages of completion when she died quite suddenly, sitting in her chair and talking to her daughters and son-in-law, on a Sunday afternoon in November, 1865.

It is very interesting to trace the Mrs. Gaskell of the novels and biography in the attitude to life which emerges in these letters. She might have been a better writer had she led a more soothing existence, yet this is questionable for she obviously needed a stimulus of excitement. But certainly she would have been a better writer had she cut down drastically on her magazine stories and had she not been frustrated by the demands of serialization. Time and again she shows how chafed she was by the need to contract or elongate in order to fill a number and by the technical demands of serialization such as the need to develop a theme more rapidly than came naturally to her in order that a number might be sure of the required punch. "If the story had been poured just warm out of my mind," she wrote to Mrs. Jameson, referring to *North and South*, "it would have taken a much larger mould. It was the cruel necessity of compressing it that hampered me." In a letter to a forgotten Victorian novelist who had written for advice she comments:

It is always an unhealthy sign when we are too conscious of any of the physical presses that go on within us; & I believe in the manner that we ought not to be too cognizant of our mental proceedings, only taking the results . . . introspection is not a safe training for a novelist. It is a weakening of the art which has crept in of late years. Just read a few pages of De Foë and you will see the healthy way in which he sets *objects not feelings* before you. . . . Don't intrude yourself into a description. If you but think eagerly of your story till you see it in action. . . .

Mrs. Gaskell did certainly think eagerly of her stories till she saw them in action. For instance, though she cannot quite claim to have written the first important novel dealing with industrial conditions because Disraeli's *Sybil* was published a few months before *Mary Barton*, yet, as Mr. Robert Blake has recently pointed out, her book made more impact than *Sybil* for she knew the Manchester poor and their circumstances personally and could project herself into their lives as Disraeli never could. A good measure of *Mary Barton*'s impact is the volley of vituperation which greeted the book. Mrs. Gaskell found this hard to bear, since the masters and their families who felt she had shattered them composed her local circle of friends and acquaintances. Another eminently Victorian howl, this time on moral grounds, greeted the publication of *Ruth*. She wrote to her sister-in-law, Anne Robson:

I could have put out much more power but that I wanted to keep it quiet in tone, lest by the slightest exaggeration, or over-stimulated sentiment I might weaken the force of what I had to say. Perhaps, after all, the thing of their significance away. How welcome then to research and scholarship one of the strangest yet most enduring members of the animal kingdom. The author of this outstanding photographic book spent months observing the lives and habits of kangaroos on Brisbane Island, Queensland. 30s.

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Foreword by Margareta Niculescu

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Editor, T. M. Mosson

A record of the seminar organized by the International University Contact for Management Education held at Amersfoort, in the Netherlands, in 1964, involving academics and businessmen.

NEW NOVELS

J. F. STRAKER'S

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Corpses appear in the strangest places in the author's thirteenth murder mystery which is set in Belgium and London and concerns the will of an eccentric merchant. By the author of *The Ratchet*, etc. 18s

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Line drawings by Daphne Rowles 15s

CAUGHT ON THE CANVAS

MARY LUTYENS: *Millais and the Ruskins*. 296pp. John Murray. £2 5s.

ARTHUR SEVERN: *The Professor*. Memoir of John Ruskin. Edited by James S. Dearden. 158pp. Allen and Unwin. 37s. 6d.

MARY BENNETT: *Millais*. Catalogue of an exhibition organized by the Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool, and the Royal Academy of Arts, London. 97pp. 40 plates. Clowes. 7s. 6d.

"Artists," said Lytton Strachey, "will never be fair to the Victorian age... they will laugh and they will shudder, and the world will follow suit." Strachey wrote that in 1914 and, at the time, it must have seemed a pretty safe assertion. Today the wind of taste blows from another quarter: cultivated London rushes to the defence of the Foreign Office building and St. Pancras Station; books on Ruskin are published with increasing frequency; we are beginning to look much more seriously at Victorian painting and Millais deputizes for Rembrandt at Burlington House.

Such a change in aesthetic fashion produces some admirable results; it helps us to enlarge our taste, to extend our sympathies and our knowledge. Nevertheless it also produces a kind of enthusiasm which is rather less valuable. The revival of interest in Ruskin, which started with R. H. Wilemski's study of 1933 and was greatly fortified after the war by Derrick Leon, Peter Quennell, Admiral James and Sir Kenneth Clark, has certainly created a demand for books about Ruskin, but we may fairly wonder whether the readers of these books have been brought to such a pitch of enthusiasm as actually to read *Aratra Penitenti*, *The Census of Agate*, *The Bible of Amiens* or even *Praetoria*. Indeed, it would not be wholly unfair to suggest that the present boom in Ruskin results not so much from an interest in his aesthetic theories (even Miss Bennett seems to have accepted them in a rather oversimplified form), his political and religious ideas, or his splendid manipulation of the English language, as from the fact that his private life was quite outstandingly disastrous and can now be discussed with perfect freedom.

Ruskin, it must be allowed, is so magnificent a subject for the biographer that it seems legitimate to consider him simply as a human being and, when the interest in his sexual misadventures produces works such as Miss Lutyens's *Millais and the Ruskins*, it would be churlish to complain, for this is not only an entertaining but also a most serious and valuable contribution to our knowledge of three eminent Victorians. *The Professor*, on the other hand, is the kind of book that is engendered by a boom. It covers ground much of which has been examined by other authors, notably by Lady Birkenhead in her study of the Severn family, and although it has been carefully and honestly edited by a notable Ruskinian scholar it cannot be said to contribute much to our knowledge of the master. Arthur Severn, whose memoir of

Ruskin this is, was to be sure a lively fellow and there was in his nature a pleasant vein of malice; he and his wife had a good deal to put up with during the great man's last years of insane irresponsibility and here a little of the debt is repaid; unfortunately Severn was not only malicious, he was also exceedingly lazy and the memoir was left half-finished. The material that remains is really insufficient for a book and that which might have been boiled down into an amusing article has been padded out into a very slight volume.

Miss Lutyens, on the other hand, would seem rather to have compressed her material. *Millais and the Ruskins* is a continuation of her previous book *Effie in Venice*, and the reader would be well advised to tackle the first volume before reading this more dramatic sequel. In both works the characters are allowed to speak for themselves through the medium of their letters, the narrative being augmented by a very scholarly commentary in which Miss Lutyens endeavours, very successfully, to remain altogether impartial. The method, which has much to recommend it when the sources are sufficiently abundant, is particularly appropriate here: for the Ruskin quarrel is not entirely dead. It is not so very long ago that we were presented with a violently partisan presentation of Effie's side of the story and an equally vehement counter-attack from the champion of Ruskin. The evidence of this book, much of which is entirely new, will be serviceable to neither party. It tells us little that we did not already know about John Ruskin although his parents appear in an even more unfavourable light than before; but Effie emerges very distinctly. There is a certain hardiness about Effie, a complaining self-assurance in her manner which makes it possible to understand Ruskin's occasional cruelties and, who, Millais's portrait of her in later life (No. 83 of the recent exhibition).

But certainly she had need of all her hardness. Moreover she was a truthful woman, more truthful than one had supposed from her celebrated letter to Mrs. La Touche—the letter which blasted Ruskin's hopes of a second marriage—where she asserted that Ruskin, influenced by Manning, had thought of retiring to a monastery. It seemed very improbable that the ultra-protestant author of *Notes on the Construction of Sheepfolds* could have entertained such an idea, but, as Miss Lutyens proves beyond any possibility of doubt, he certainly did. The point is of some interest, not only because it saves Effie's reputation for truthfulness, but also because it

gives a further glimpse of the fantastic complexity and inconsistency of Ruskin's character.

On the whole this book confirms Mr. Clutton-Brock's view of the Millais-Ruskin affair. "There was no fault; there was misfortune, even tragedy" and, in the main, we can agree with him that "all three were perfectly blameless." They were in fact caught in a particularly diabolical snare of fate, neither Ruskin nor Effie understanding why their marriage had come to nothing, both cruelly bound by the irrational knots of their society and placed in a situation in which they might have behaved far worse than they did.

Millais, it would appear, was as much ensnared and bewildered as any of them. On the face of it his part in the business appears heroic; he was the champion who rescued the lady in distress and was rewarded with the appropriately happy ending. He now appears in a rather different role. He was in truth a rather simple character caught up in a very complex situation, the lover of a woman who was neither married nor unmarried, utterly bewildered and horrified by his predicament, puzzled and incensed by the calm insouciance of Ruskin, who it would seem probably anticipated and certainly rejoiced in Effie's escape. Millais was the half-reluctant and wholly terrified groom of a bride who might, for all he knew, be radically unfit for marriage.

Miss Lutyens has found a good deal of relevant material with which to illustrate her book, including the celebrated portrait of Ruskin (which is one of her main themes), the Glenfinlas sketches and a charming study of Effie wearing "natural ornaments." Surprisingly she does not include the "Ghost at the Wedding Ceremony" which Dr. Juan Evans has very convincingly associated with Millais's perturbations in 1853. This work and several other drawings of the period, that in which Millais achieved the highest degree of poetic invention, were included in the recent exhibition at the Royal Academy. The organizers might well have found some further examples of "natural ornament," a side of Millais's work of which we know too little. There are other omissions: "Peace Concluded", "The Rescue", and the "Deserted Curden". The organizers were, presumably, obliged to work in haste, but Miss Bennett's admirable catalogue shows little sign of it. It is a very clear, careful and scholarly work and if the advocacy of Millais's later paintings in the preface is unconvincing, the fault lies not in the writer but in the pictures themselves, which are appalling.

FLORENTINE GALLERIES

FILIPPO ROSSI: *The Uffizi and Pitti*. 319pp. Thames and Hudson.

The Uffizi and Pitti is designed for visitors to Florence. Written by the former Superintendent of the Florentine galleries, Professor Filippo Rossi, it deals first with the buildings in which the public collections in Florence are housed and with the history of their contents, and then with eighty of the paintings that are shown in them. What results is a useful, well-planned book which will greatly enhance the visitor's appreciation of the collections. A specially bound edition of the book is offered for sale on the half of the Italian Art and Archives Rescue Fund.

The story Professor Rossi tells inevitably starts with the great Medici commissions of the fifteenth century, of which Uccello's "Rout of San Romano", Botticelli's "Primavera" and "Birth of Venus", and the Rogier van der Weyden "Entombment" are the most notable survivals in painting. There follow brief accounts of the collection of Cosimo I and of the creation by Francesco I of an art gallery in the Uffizi. The next great enrichment of the Medici collections inheritance passed to the Urbino Rovere, wife of Ferdinand II. It included the "Bella" and the Della Rovere portraits of Titian, the Montefeltro portraits of Piero della Francesca, and many other masterpieces.

When the son of Cosimo III, the Grand Prince Ferdinand, predeceased his father in 1713, Sarlo's "Madonna of the Harpies", three altar pieces by Fra Bartolomeo, and Parmigianino's "Madonna del Collo Lungo" were among the paintings added to the royal collection. The next major changes occurred after Ferdinand III, who organized an exchange of paintings with the Vienna gallery, thereby bringing to Florence the Bellini "Allegory" and "Diana" and the "Adoration of the Kings" and who installed in the Palazzo Pitti Raphael's

35s. (Paperback, 21s.)

"Madonna del Granduca" and the Doni portraits. The present distribution of material between the galleries was effected in all essentials in 1860s, with the founding of the Bargello and the Museo di San Marco.

The colour plates of individual paintings in the second half of the book are unequal in quality, but are acceptable at the low figure at which the book is priced. Professor Rossi's notes on them are judicious and intelligent, and could be read with advantage before the paintings. The book ends with thirty pages of small black-and-white reproductions of other notable pictures in the two collections.

The fourteenth Jubilee edition of *Who's Who in the Theatre*, edited by Freda Gaye, is published by Pitman at £7 7s. (1,720pp.). As well as the biographical section, which occupies the bulk of the volume, there are sections on London playbills from 1921 to 1965, long runs on the London and New York stages, a short history of the National Theatre, honours in the theatre, the work of the Drama departments of the British Council and the Arts Council, and photographs ranging from Herbert Beerboom Tros to Wolsey in *Henry VIII* to the Chichester Festival Theatre's 1962 *Uncle Vanya* directed by Laurence Olivier.

Reprints

Population Movements

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Franklin

VIENNA ECLIPSED

SARAH GAINHAM: *Night Falls on the City*. 572pp. Collins. 30s.

D. V. Glass

Journalists are by no means the only writers who like to evoke the character of a city with the use of a few words. Sarah Gainham, though, as Londoners know, is a writer who has created a city which is recognizable to the citizens as it is to the foreign visitor. Miss Gainham and her husband are both foreign correspondents, and it is her knowledge of the city, that provides the background for this long and impressive novel, *Night Falls on the City*, the story of a young man and woman who, in the city of Vienna, find themselves caught up in the swirling vortex of a civil war.

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FAITH AND FABLE

ISAAC BASHEVITS SINGER: *In My Father's Court*. 307pp. Short Friday. 30s. each.

PINHAS SADEH: *Life as a Parable*. Translated by Richard Plantz. 368pp. Blond. £2 2s.

Isaac Bashevis Singer was born in Radzynin, Poland, in 1904. He grew up in Warsaw, where he was educated by his father, a rabbi, and at a rabbinical seminary. In 1926 he became a journalist, working for Yiddish newspapers in Warsaw until in 1935 he went to the United States, became a journalist, working for Yiddish. Pinhas Sadeh was born in Lemberg in the late 1920s. At the age of four he was taken by his parents to Palestine (as it then was called) and was brought up as a speaker of Hebrew. His parents were unhappy in their marriage. They did not present him with a religious tradition for him to accept, reject or modify: and he was faced not only by the paradoxes of Judaism as a religion but also by the conflicts inherent in Zionism as a national movement. *Life as a Parable* was written by Sadeh at the age of twenty-seven and first published in 1956.

Both deeply Jewish, these two writers provide violent contrasts between their temperaments, their generations and the directions in which the currents of history have moved them. Singer, who is famous for his masterpiece *The Family*, for his advantage not only of being the maturest man but also of a childhood which, though hard and poverty-stricken, was secure. These two books, the first a memoir, the second a collection of short stories, stem from his Polish childhood. Between the recollection and the story the dividing line is small. The faith of boyhood has become the faith of age. There is no rejection of religion, superstition or magic. These things were and Mr. Singer's value judgments are moral and spiritual. This man was good, even a saint, despite his oddity, and that man was a crook, also, despite his even greater oddity. It is for God to judge on the last day: enough for Mr. Singer that, saint or sinner, every human being is fascinating and surprising.

The pieces collected as *In My Father's Court* were published first in the *Jewish Daily Forward* as a series under the pen-name Isaac Warshawsky. It was only after their completion that he decided to issue them in book form under his real name "because they portrayed a life and environment that no longer exist and are unique". One suspects that the life and environment never did exist in this form: because what gives the pieces their charm and coherence is the child's eye through which they are viewed and the man's mind which recoils them. The major criticism of *In My Father's Court* as a collection is that the newspaper origin is still apparent. There is no development in the consciousness of the child-observer, no pointing in the order of the pieces. But they are all written with the ease of a master who

never tries to overstretch himself, who may open a window on eternity but who closes it before the glare dazzles. The short stories have no autobiographical thread. But they are equally relaxed. Some of them have appeared in American magazines; any of them might have been told by a professional story-teller in a market place. They are as robust, salty, wise, simple and sophisticated as folklore.

Pinhas Sadeh is a more complicated writer trying to cope with a more complex world. He is a poet in a barren country where Zionists sweat to make the desert blossom. But even as a poet, he does not feel at ease, because he wants also to be a prophet. Poetry and prophecy are never identical in matter or manner, even when the poet-prophet can accept a tradition within which and against which he can work. *Life as a Parable* has been translated by Richard Plantz. It contains a number of Sadeh's poems, which may, despite the strictures of Hebrew critics, be very beautiful in the original. In translation they are of little literary interest.

A sort of Hebrew Colin Wilson, Sadeh tries to effect a synthesis of his influences, the Old and New Testaments, Nietzsche, Dostoevsky, Kierkegaard, etc. He hates tradition, culture, society, psychology, but he gets terribly mixed up in Angst and negatives. Perhaps there is some great guilt that lies upon me, that enmeshes my entire being. But what is it? Is it my own guilt or my share in the guilt of every single person in this world? It has to be an enormous guilt, if it spreads such terrible anguish over my heart, my joy, my whole being! If it does not allow me to not suffer from the fact that I am not poorer than the poorest of men, lonelier than the most forsaken outcast, afflicted more than the greatest of sufferers, somewhere on the face of the globe, that I am not the most despised, the most desperate, the most needful of divine mercy.

The confusions of this passage lie deeper than its semantic surface. The parable of Pinhas Sadeh's life is revealed more by the autobiographical passages than by the author's meditations. This is an example of extreme introversion, the social and religious impulses being turned inward. The religiously healthy man, in his attempts in time to achieve communion with God in eternity which cannot fail to fall short of perfection, is driven into community with his fellow creatures, whose condition, however different in other respects, is similar in this. But Pinhas Sadeh, absorbed in his own blatant loneliness, tries single-handed to take on the sins of the whole world. Instead of serving God humbly, he wants to be God for God's sake; and in striving to be so much more than human, his *Life as a Parable* has proved so much less.

JARROW BOY

ARTHUR BARTON: *Two Lamps in our Street*. 182pp. Hutchinson. 25s.

Two Lamps in our Street is an autobiography through which the lion-hunter would stalk in vain. Great names were not conspicuous in the streets of Jarrow between the wars, but Mr. Barton gets on very well without them. This is a vivid yet in no way self-indulgent picture of a region and an era. Life in the coalfields, the rare excursions into the north-eastern countryside, the grammar school, the first job in a shipyard, the strikes, the dole queues—all is remembered with an unflinching but unmercenary passion. The days were full of privation, yet the book projects a love of living that seems to have got lost somewhere along the recovery line. Such comparisons make a dangerous pulp to preach from and Mr. Barton never mounts it. However, he can be forgiven for introducing us to an old uncle who survives into the more secure days and is bewildered at the "emptiness of heart and mind" that

Morris is an exciting but exhausting subject for study. His range of activities and interests was so wide, his influence so dispersed, that it is no easy matter to cover him adequately and fairly in every aspect. For example, Mr. Thompson mentions that he has inspected Morris stained glass in some 200 churches, a Pevsnerian peregrination concerned with but one facet of Morris's artistic spread, and which resulted here in a useful gazetteer. He also had to acquaint himself with the techniques of tapestry, carpet and stained glass making.

Moreover the biographical works are by now considerable, from J. W. Mackail's two-volume *Life*, written and issued promptly in 1899, after Morris's death, to E. P. Thompson's largely political 900-page reevaluation published in 1955. In between and subsequently there has been a vast amount written on Morris and his circle and their influence on art, literature and politics. Between the wars a Kelmscott Fellowship kept Morris's memory green, and more recently a William Morris Society, founded appropriately after a gathering at Red House early in the 1950s, has made Morris better known and even fashionable. There is enough in Morris for everyone to pull out what suits him best, often with misleading or distorted results. Those who have favoured his "conservative" artistic products have often deprecated or diluted his "communist" politics; others who have approved of the politics have found his art backward-looking. Then there have been those preoccupied with personalities, notably the Morris-Rossetti-Jane triangle. There has been a good deal of hagiology too.

However, in recent years there has been research into Morris's period and his position as a designer, and this is the first reason that Mr. Thompson gives for writing his book. The second purpose was to reconsider him as a Victorian designer in the light of the closer examination made of his contemporaries. Accord-

ingly the book consists of a succinctly written account of Morris's life, with no great attention to personalities, followed by twelve chapters on his theories and activities. Each forms a separate appreciation or essay on architecture, furniture and furnishing, literary tastes, &c., but the last three are devoted to Morris's politics and his view of society, past, present and future. The author makes no secret of his overall admiration for his subject, but the criticism is balanced and dispassionate, and although little claim is made for original research, his book cumulatively affords the fairest, most rounded view of Morris available. Only to be regretted is the skimpiness of the illustration, for a book on Morris's work needs plenty of pictures. Four pages of colour plates, poorly reproducing the originals, and sixteen of monochrome are not good enough; but that no doubt is the fault of the publisher rather than the author.

Mr. Thompson clears away some of the myths that still hang about Morris: that he was against machinery, that he could not understand Marxist economics, and that he became politically disillusioned in his last few years. Direct quotations give the lie.

So far as Morris's position as a pioneer of the modern movement is concerned, the author concludes that he was not a direct inspiration to modern design; he was a "classical" rather than a "modern" designer. He did not, as has often been implied, stand in solitary pre-eminence as a textile designer amid the flotsam and jetsam of the post-1851 epoch; and he had little influence on contemporary furniture design. His chief claim to have affected the modern movement on the Continent and in the United States as well as in Britain lies in his lectures, in which he called for simplicity in both furniture and book design, rather than in the products of his firm or his printing press.

In other directions also, Mr. Thompson points out, too much has

been claimed for Morris and his circle, from the commissioning of Red House to the founding of the Kelmscott Press. The former was not a turning point in nineteenth-century architecture, but the logical continuation of the work of Street and Butterfield. The latter did not revolutionize book design and printing, although it did bring up sharply the question of standards in book production. Here, perhaps, the author goes too far in stating that "its direct influence on style was generally bad." The Kelmscott books have influenced by their insistence on quality generations of typographers and printers unconcerned with, and even hostile to, archaic type faces, hand-made paper and vellum bindings. And were the early Everyman end-papers, which he cites, really so "incongruous"?

In literature, he is critical of Morris's conscious and even invented archaisms, and suggests that his hostility to contemporary literature after 1855 and to criticism stunted his own development as a writer. Morris's regard for poetry writing as an exercise in craftsmanship, as summed up in the famous remark, "if a chap can't compose an epic poem while he's wearing tapestry he had better shut up." He might well have been inclined to regard the converse as true also. As a result he wrote too quickly—750 lines of *Jason* in a single day—and could not bother to work his verse over. Nor did he pay any attention to the critics, for no man wrote more to please himself alone. Nevertheless Mr. Thompson puts in a

strong plea for reconsideration of *Stained Glass*. Then there are the apparent inconsistencies between Morris's theory and practice, which critics have been quick, often overquick, to point out: the Radical making expensive furniture for "the swinish luxury of the rich"; the advocate of pleasurable handicraft designing wallpaper involving monotonous repetitive work; the Socialist who seemed to look not forward but back to the Middle Ages. Morris was often wrong, but at least his practice did not compromise his principles and he was big enough to stride over these contradictions; however he may be faulted in detail, he was and remains, as Mr. Thompson repeatedly shows, a striking influence and inspiration in almost every field he touched.

His overall impact lay not so much in this or that aspect of the arts or politics but in obliging people to look again at life and art, in general or in detail, and in insisting on standards. He never designed a building and scarcely made a piece of furniture, yet his influence on architecture and domestic design was profound; an influence of theory rather than of taste. It would be nonsense to imply that there would not have been a "modern movement" as we know it without Morris; yet whether the issue was the arts and crafts movement, calligraphy, book design or textile patterning, there he was at the heart of the revival. There has been no better text for it than his "have nothing in your houses that you do

THE CASE AGAINST MARY

GEORGE MALCOLM THOMPSON: *The Crime of Mary Stuart*. 175pp. Hutchinson. 30s.

Almost exactly 400 years ago—on February 10, 1567, to be precise—Darnley, consort of Mary Queen of Scots, was murdered. Whether he died by explosives or some other method is disputed. This murder is the event to which Mr. George Malcolm Thompson devotes this volume, and his conclusion is given in its title.

There are some mysteries, of which the murder of Darnley is one, that are traditionally insoluble. However plausible the theorists, however thorough the investigators, the mysteries remain on the books, not so much because they are more intrinsically mysterious than other events for which there are accepted solutions as because, over time, a vested interest has been established in their insolubility. We are witnesses in our own time of the development of fresh mysteries in this genre.

Mr. Thompson has carefully examined and pondered the evidence surrounding the death of Darnley. He has drawn especially on Dr. Armstrong Davidson's recent microscopic analysis of the Casket Letters, which constitute the direct, as distinct from the circumstantial, evidence for Mary's complicity. But he does not accept Dr. Davidson's conclusion that the Queen was more sinned against than sinning. What Mr. Thompson does, that a professional historian would not do, is to make a case. He does it with great skill. Every paragraph packs a punch; every third one puts an unfavourable gloss or throws doubt on a favourable one. The book is brilliantly readable, partial, journalistic in the best sense.

But it is not history. The breadth, the scope, the understanding of mixed motives, the comprehension of the pressure of events, are purged from these crisp, belittled, stinging pages. What Mr. Thompson gives us, in a modern idiom, is a renaissance drama of the second order, a piece by, say, Tourneur; and one can see the temptation. If ever there was a Vittoria Corombona in real life it was the Queen of Scots, and both well, Darnley, and the hateful covenant of Scots nobility would all fit perfectly into the dramatic personae of a Scots Tragedy.

Mr. Thompson, on the whole, takes what might be called the orthodox view of Mary's concern with the murder of her husband. This view is that even if she were not herself one of the conspirators she knew well enough that a conspiracy was afoot; that she played a part by luring Darnley to his doom from his comparative safety in Glasgow; and

gladly profited by Darnley's death. For these propositions Mr. Thompson relies on evidence of character, Casket Letter II, and Mary's conduct after Darnley's death.

As has been hinted above, these controversies, stated in the personal terms beloved of Mariologists and Mariophobes, will not be solved. The originals of the Casket Letters have never been seen since they passed into the illal hands of King James VI: ambition, fear, ignorance, and superstition infected both the witnesses whose testimony we have and the inquirers who recorded it. What appears intrinsically unlikely is that Queen Mary's personal will had any substantial effect on events in Scotland during her reign.

The explanation of Darnley's death is therefore more likely to be found in terms of baronial politics than of female passion and ambition. The sociology of the Scottish peerage during the long years when there was no effective sovereign remains to be examined. When this has been done many legends will be demolished and the bane of Scottish history—its excessive personalization—will perhaps be exorcized.

In particular the role of the reformation in Scotland and its relationship to feudal power must be distinguished before pronouncements about Mary's actions can sound convincing. Here Mr. Thompson, who has marshalled a great deal of material about Mary's own behaviour, is somewhat superficial. He emphasizes, correctly, the Kirk's propaganda success in blackening Mary's character. But it is surely too rosy a picture of the Scottish Reformation to say that in 1560 the old order passed peacefully away primarily because a sensible financial settlement was made between the dispossessed clergy and the Crown. The chief beneficiaries of the Scottish Reformation in the financial sense were the nobility. And it was not a specially peaceful process.

In short, Mr. Thompson, as is to be expected from a Scots author of his experience and skill, has produced a book which commands attention, but in its attitude it is almost old-fashioned. And even so he has to concede that Mary was not quite Knox's *Feminine Ideal*, but a more complex character, capable indeed of febrile bursts of energy, yet rarely if ever mistress of the situation. And that, after all, was the supreme task to which a renaissance queen had to devote herself.

not know to be useful. Miss Sontag's strength as a writer lies in her hard-headed, lucid, life-including English in the round. Her readers will long remember the lady who sat on a mound, as well as buildings, in the first of the conditions of Jonathan Miller's *Mousetrap*, and said, "I am not a Socialist, but I am a Socialist." For his vision was where *Rose-Sontag* is a serious form of state socialism, offence among young people. Even Graham Wallis's *Fabianism* there, after the famous "Notes on Camp" had been published in *Puritan Review* and Miss Sontag's system of property holding, a column of American *Vogue*, the index on the visible orthodoxy was diluted and English human life, but including visitors were allowed to air their system of religion, class prejudices.

If the political British cannot write very well. These essays, name, have moved far from their original vantage point and would certainly sentence "great writers are explosive denunciations of their husbands or lovers"; "most not be said that the idealistic thought in our time struggles presented seventy-seven with the feeling of homelessness"; *News from Nowhere*, and then fall into a more contented "the clearly and detail of American academic dialect. It is true aëtic painting, is for me that she has not much sense of humour. It takes naively to laugh at up Morris better than her remark that there are 'some elements in the Clarion' about which it isn't necessary to have a position"; but it takes even more naively not to recast such a sentence to avoid the laugh. It is true that she is not free from the vice of bringing up heavy verbal artillery from neurology or economics to bolster a dubious argument, and a little too free with dropping the adjective "brilliant" for words like *Levi-Strauss*.

His finest novel—*Les Structures Élémentaires de la pensée*—or Michel Leiris's *Poésies* and his *Twenty Thousand Years* and his *Theatrical Aspects among the Ethiopians of Gondar*. (How brilliant of Miss Sontag, we cordially assent, to have such sure judgment of such specialized brilliance.) All this, though, does not alter the fact that she has a widely informed, tirelessly argumentative, thoroughly contemporary mind of a high order. One can only read the sympathetic study of *Levi-Strauss*, the modest but firm judgment on Camus, the putting down of modern "religious fellow-

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SUSAN SONTAG: *Against Interpretation*. 304pp. Eyre and Spottiswoode. 35s.

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WHO'S AFRAID OF THE CANTOS?

NOEL STOCK: *Reading the Cantos*. 120pp. Routledge and Kegan Paul. 28s.

Mr. Stock is an old ally and friend of Ezra Pound and he edited a series of tributes to the poet on his eightieth birthday. Nevertheless, in this short, penetrating volume he is mainly worried by a suspicion that many recent critics of *The Cantos*, especially Hugh Kenner, Donald Davie, and George Dekker, have tended to take, in their examination of this longest and most ambitious poem of our century, intention for Pound's accounts or their own notions of intention for achievement. He thinks that there is a general belief that the *Cantos* are far more of a unity, more intricately interlinked, more easy to understand in design and in detail, than a "terribly close scholarly examination proves them to be. They have also been thought to be more subtle and profound than they are. The effect of subtlety and profundity, says Mr. Stock, is largely due to a personal quirk, an individual

KARL MALKOFF: *Theodore Roethke*. 243pp. Columbia University Press. £4 10s.
from *Open House* (1941) in *The Field* (1964). Some of the more difficult poems are studied in detail, but normally Mr. Malkoff is concerned to establish general patterns which may be useful. Most of these are patterns of imagery, especially in *The Lost Son* (1948) where the family likeness among the images is first established. Where particular influences can be specified, Mr. Malkoff is very helpful, especially when he shows the Jungian strain in Roethke's poems and defines it by quotation from Maud Bodkin's *Archetypal Patterns in Poetry*. There are interesting pages on the influence of Evelyn Underhill's *Mysticism* and Tillyard's theological essays.

A good deal of work remains to be done. Students of Roethke's poems speak of the influence of Christopher Smart, largely on the evidence of "Heard in a Violent Wind" and "Where Knocks is Open Wide". But it would be useful to know how far the influence goes. The title of "Where Knocks is Open Wide" is taken from Smart's *A Song to David*, but Roethke could have found the relevant stanza nearer at hand, quoted in a famous essay by Marianne Moore. Mr. Malkoff might perhaps have inquired more deeply. His book will say little to those readers who are already intimate with Roethke's poems; but those who are coming to Roethke for the first or even the second time will find him a reliable guide.

BECAUSE IT'S THERE

DONALD ALLEN and ROBERT CREELEY (Editors): *The New Writing in the U.S.A.* 331 pp. Penguin. 7s. 6d.

Perhaps the most accurate description of *The New Writing in the U.S.A.* is that it does not feature the work of Robert Lowell, John Berryman, Richard Wilbur or James Dickey. Many of the chosen authors have already appeared in Mr. Allen's *The New American Poetry 1945-1960*. A curious aspect of the matter is disclosed, however, by comparing the two books. Where the same authors are selected, they are represented by an entirely different choice of poems. The only exception is Michael McClure's "Peyote Poem, Part I". This suggests that the editors are mainly concerned to produce a new anthology. If they really prefer the new selections to the old in each case, they put the durability of this literature under question. Philip Rahv complains, in the preface to *Modern Occasions*, that the American avant-garde, so far as it can be said to exist, is turning out art-objects as consumer goods. Certainly the obsolescence-quotient is high. In the representative selection from *The Naked Lunch* in the Allen and Creeley book, Mr. Burroughs's dialogue already sounds as antique as Danton Runyon:

"I cut into the automaton and there is Bill Gains luddled in someone else's overcoat looking like a 1918 banker with pure is, and Old Man Shabby and incoherent, spitting shiny round cake with his dirty fingers, shins over the dirt."

The anthology is interesting, but only in the sense that nearly everything is interesting. By more exacting standards it is merely a random collection of ribald offerings. Readers may prefer to take their William Carlos Williams neat.

The point of *Modern Occasions* is not clear. The collection of poems, plays, stories, and essays would fit neatly in three issues of Mr. Rahv's *Puritan Review*, an appropriate home for this material. Instead, we have a book at 45s. The point seems to be a matter of salesmanship rather than of literature. Mr. Rahv has twenty-one writers; fifteen Americans, three English, one Canadian, one German, one Dutch. Most of the items are acceptable for as long as the reading lasts. The more compelling pieces include an excerpt from Mordecai Richler's "St. Urbain's Horseman", a short story by Irvin Faust called "Weisburg of Arabia", and Robert Lowell's poem, "The Vanity of Human Wishes".

Thelwell/Chastel, Paris, have published Charlotte Maurin's *Le Secret des Brûlés* in their "Collection de l'Esprit Vivant". The book is subtitled "Charlotte Brontë d'après les Juveniles, ses lettres et ceux qui l'ont connue", and it is principally a biographical study.

Time may prove that Miss Sontag was on the winning side. It cannot undo the fact that judgments of novelty are ultimately as subjective as those of morality and as transient as those of pleasure. The long run, a work of art may be a fascinating technical virtuoso and a flop. (Godard is very much such a case in point.) Miss Sontag cannot escape the dreary rationality of the critic's role quite so easily, though she has a good try.

THE LOST SON

KARL MALKOFF: *Theodore Roethke*. 243pp. Columbia University Press. £4 10s.

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DEPRIVE
D CORRUPT—II

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DEPRIVE AND CORRUPT

Sir, I have seen in neither the TLS nor the *Evening Standard* any attempt to distinguish the sexual from the brutal; yet unless this distinction is made, discussion is rendered valueless. On the unexceptionable assumption that any piece of exciting writing, whether it describes the battle of the Pelennor Fields or the preparation of *hommes de poudet Agnes Sorel*, does in fact excite, we have to decide what we find objectionable and what not. We have no qualm if the reader hears the martial clamour of trumpets ringing in his ears, nor if his salivary glands work over-time. Why should we, no longer believing that sex is disgusting or that masturbatory induces lunacy, be disturbed if what is on the printed page arouses strong sexual feelings and the desire for their gratification? Why should we be disturbed, indeed, by the gratification, whether it be auto-, hetero- or homo-sexual? Since Freud, we have learned to look askance at those who regard sexual activity as wicked. Brutality, not sex, is the theme, not the erotic, to defer to Wayland Young—is the human activity that as social being, we must be most concerned about; and if it is this strain in our natures that the exciting writing excites, we are right to repress, and indeed suppress, such writing whether the stimulation leads to the Derbyshire Moors or Dachau.

There will be some who protest that more people have been killed by those influenced by the Bible than by those influenced by Sade. This must be drawn between such writing as presents

the brutality as desirable or commendable, and writing which, while it might be referred to as justification for, e.g., smiting Philistines, cannot be said to fire the reader with that resolve. On this level, *Paradise Lost* and *Last Laid* *Chaucer* were acquitted; and the works of Sade (or some of them) and Schlegel would be convicted, as they deserve. Would even M. Girouds object then?

D. C. ROSE.
87 Avenue Road, St. John's Wood, London, N.W.8.

TROILUS AND CRESSIDA

Sir—Mr. Empon's letter about *Troilus and Cressida* in your issue for March 2 continues the ancient error that the cancel found in the passage of some time. In *Studies in Bibliography*, volume I for 1949-50, Professor Philip Williams demonstrated conclusively that the cancel found in the last sheet through the press, that is, by half-sheet imposition with the final copy of text. Indeed, since only three copies of fifteen are known with the original uncancelled title-page, given the bibliographical facts about the printing of the cancellations, it is probable that uncancelled copies are aberrant and no intention ever existed to place two issues on the market. It is likely that the only form ever intended for publication was that with the substituted title.

FREDSON BOWERS.
The University of Virginia, Charlottesville 22901.

NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

Sir—May I make a comment on Mr. David A. Randall's letter printed in your issue of March 9? The manuscripts of writers whose fame does not fluctuate may well fetch a high price whether published or not. The late George Sherburn thought that this was so and wrote as follows in the preface to his edition of Pope's letters: "To owners and especially dealers in autographs acknowledge that the value of a letter, having been ascertained by the market, is an act of gratitude on my part. Almost without exception dealers have been ready to allow . . . transcripts to be made—and this in spite of the current tradition that such procedure cuts the money value of a letter. Having watched the prices of Pope letters now for twenty-five years, I should like to register the opinion that publication or other reproduction has far less bearing on the price of a letter than some imagine. If dealers or owners have suffered financial loss through helping me, I am very sorry. They have been generous, and my hope is that interest in Pope, increased through this addition, may eventually reward them."

Mr. Brown's fame has not endured as Pope's has and owners of her letters, whether published or not, may suffer in a way that owners of letters by writers like him would not, or not necessarily.

GEOFFREY TILLOTSON.
Birkbeck College, University of London, Malet Street, London, W.C.1.

THE ESSENTIAL HÖLDERLIN

Sir—The writer of your middle-page article (March 9) states in the concluding paragraph: "We may now look forward to further volumes containing greater plays—*Der Schwabe*, *Der Kain*, and the libretto for *Die Lorelei*." May I point out that a third Hölderlin volume containing English versions of just those works—and others besides—appeared some years ago, under the same imprint and edited by the same person, namely, the volume in question is *Hugo von Hölderlin's Selected Plays and Libretti*, published by the Bollingen Foundation, (Pantheon, New York) in 1963, and by Routledge, (Kegan Paul, London), in 1964. Whereas the earlier volume received many reviews—including one in your columns, on October 20, 1961—*Selected Plays and Libretti* went almost unnoticed in this country.

The writer of your article also touches on parallels between works by Hölderlin and those by S. E. Eliot's verse plays, mentioning "repeatedly" by Herbert Howarth and Franz Kuna in 1963, and by Routledge, (Kegan Paul, London), in 1964. Whereas the earlier volume received many reviews—including one in your columns, on October 20, 1961—*Selected Plays and Libretti* went almost unnoticed in this country.

Frantz Kuna and by the writer of your article. What is more, Herr Kuna ignores the most substantial of T. S. Eliot's published references to Hölderlin, his Preface to *Poems and Plays*, and his *A Note on "The Tower"* in *Selected Plays and Libretti*. These two pieces were originally intended to be preface a volume of Hölderlin's to which T. S. Eliot alluded. When it became necessary to devote a separate volume to the longer plays, T. S. Eliot's original Preface nor my correspondence with Hölderlin with T. S. Eliot about Hölderlin's bear out Franz Kuna's assumption that Eliot was familiar enough with Hölderlin's works to plagiarize them.

MICHAEL HAMBURGER.
344 Half Moon Lane, London, S.E.24.

ANNALS OF LOCH CE

Sir—A recent bookseller's catalogue lists, at £18 15s., a reprint of W. M. Hennessy's edition of the *Annals of Loch Ce*, published in two volumes in the Kail Series in 1871. Scholars are not usually numbered among the wealthy, and it should be pointed out that these same volumes were photographically reprinted for the Irish Manuscripts Commission in 1939, are still in print, and cost a mere 30s.

GEORGE MAC NICOLL.
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DEPARTMENT OF MANUSCRIPTS. Applications are invited from persons qualified for a post of ASSISTANT LIBRARIAN.

DEPARTMENT OF ANTIQUITIES. Applications are invited from persons qualified for a post of ASSISTANT LIBRARIAN.

DEPARTMENT OF COINTEGRATION. Applications are invited from persons qualified for a post of ASSISTANT LIBRARIAN.

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PUBLIC AND UNIVERSITY APPOINTMENTS

ENGLISH DEPARTMENT HEAD. Applications are invited from persons qualified for a post of ASSISTANT LIBRARIAN.

THE DAVIDSON CLINIC. Applications are invited from persons qualified for a post of ASSISTANT LIBRARIAN.

SURINER SCHOOL. Applications are invited from persons qualified for a post of ASSISTANT LIBRARIAN.

OF HUMAN SUBJECT. Applications are invited from persons qualified for a post of ASSISTANT LIBRARIAN.

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EDUCATIONAL GALERIES AND EXHIBITIONS

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